

MANUFACTURING SUMMIT 2016
TRABAHO AT NEGOSYO

*REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR, LABOR, CIVIL SOCIETY AND
ACADEME*

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS: USAID, JICA, EU-TRTA AND GIZ

FELLOW GOVERNMENT WORKERS

GUESTS, LADIES & GENTLEMEN

We bring you greetings and congratulations from the Office of the President. The past nearly 150 days have been extraordinary in scope, depth and developments. It is an understatement to say that President Rodrigo Roa Duterte has placed the country on the map.

While some sectors may be concerned about the state of business affairs, having a ringside view as the President met with leaders in the region puts the whole matter in context – he is happily acknowledged as an emerging leader and voice for this part of the world.

He is also in a unique position to steer the nation towards a path that serves the people's interests better.

What are the people's interests? They want to achieve personal well-being, and also contribute to the common good.

And what do people expect from the government? The people expect the government to provide quality public services that help them achieve their dreams. They expect the government to facilitate and not hamper their aspirations.

And now they see in President Duterte someone who understands them, will act in their behalf and serve their interests and not just that of a narrow social class.

What are the President's intentions and do these converge with the people's needs?

Let me bring you back to the four questions he often asked people on the campaign trail?

- *"kumain ka na ba?": "have you eaten already?"*
- *"nag-aaral ba mga anak mo?" : are your children in school?*
- *"nakapag-pagamot ka na ba?": have you received medical attention?*
- *"panatag ba ang loob mo?" : do you feel secure and at peace*

His questions cover major areas of his socio-economic agenda:

- *inclusive prosperity*
- *quality public services*
- *peace and harmony within our borders*

His more visible efforts have been geared towards creating a *peaceful, stable, crime, corruption and illegal drug-free environment* so that business can prosper, people can be gainfully employed, and for micro-small-and medium enterprises to have market space to start, grow and enlarge.

So it is encouraging to note that the Philippines' remarkable macro-economic performance and transformation; manufacturing growth sustained; unemployment rate improved to 5.4% from 6.5% in the same period of July 2015.

But as Sec Ramon Lopez has noted the employment challenge remains, 2.3m Filipinos are unemployed, while 7.1m Filipinos remain underemployed. It is for this reason that we welcome DTI's thrust to create ***globally competitive, value adding, innovative and inclusive industries.***

Our industrial strategy focuses on *labor-intensive industries* to fully utilize the young, male 15-24 years old with high school education comprising 61% of the unemployed and the 36% who are college educated but also unemployed

- our strategy focuses on labor intensive industries such as food and resource-based manufacturing, tourism, garments and construction
- and high-tech industries like electronics, aerospace, automotive and chemicals which are already present in the country – and which require English speaking and trainable work force

Our over 100m population, growing middle class, rising consumer and business confidence, increasing spending power and market opportunities bode well for the economy; and the huge export market in the ASEAN economic community alone with over 600m people represent untapped opportunities.

In the light of these, the government is taking a more pro-active role in ensuring the proper environment for the growth of the private sector, aside from removing the constraints that hamper industrial growth.

You have had two days of intensive discussion on what could possibly make the Philippine manufacturing sector more competitive and productive. Let me give you a bit of an insight into how the leadership style of PRRD actually hones in on what you have been discussing.

During his early days as mayor, he started his mantra of Peace and Order. Which addressed the notorious situation of the city. After sometime, people began to say, "how come he keeps talking about peace and order? Does the mayor not have an

economic plan?” His response, in effect was, “if we have peace and order, everything else will follow.”

And true enough it did. Davao City was voted twice in the top 20 most liveable cities in Asia, and business followed. At a certain stage, peace and order was not just a political mantra, it described the context in which people felt safe, needs were met and business flourished. Because Mayor Duterte got things done. He was a pragmatist who set aside belief systems, ideologies and analysis paralysis.

What happened in Davao is being writ large as a nation. The President is setting Peace and Order as his primary job, and engaging the rest of the nation – through government - to do what they do best – follow their dreams and so help build a nation we can be proud of, and Filipinos can become citizens that the nation can be equally proud to call its own.

As you wind up this event, we pray that you prioritize the choices that give the most significant impact and benefits for a globally competitive manufacturing sector. One that contributes to the making of Filipinos worthy of the nation and a nation worthy of Filipinos.

Thank you.